

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This submission accompanies an RCE and serves as a response to the Advisory Action issued June 19, 2006 and the Final Office Action of March 6, 2006, in connection with the above-identified application. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested. A Petition for Extension of Time (two months) and the fee therefor are submitted herewith.

Claims 1-6, 19-20 and 25-26 have been canceled. Applicant requests the Examiner to take into account the following remarks with respect to remaining claims 7-14, 21-24 and 27-28.

The remaining claims are not concerned with the arguments previously submitted based on the processing at ordinary temperature, as presented in canceled claims 1-6, 19-20 and 25-26. Rather, the remaining claims are characterized in that they are directed to a process of supplying to the surface of a substrate, an alkaline solution, an acid solution, and the alkaline solution again, in the specific order indicated. In the Advisory Action, this feature of the remaining claims is not addressed at all.

In the Final Office Action, it has been asserted that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to repeat the cleaning process as needed. However, applicant has pointed out that supplying an alkaline solution, an acid solution and the alkaline solution in that order, does not, in fact, constitute repeating the cleaning steps. But the Examiner has not specifically addressed this argument. It is requested that the claims be further considered in light of the foregoing observation and the following additional remarks.

None of Okuda, et. al. (US2002/0035762), Aoki (5,635,053), Chang (6,423,147), Hall (4,326,553) and Bran (6,039,059), Verhaverbeke (5,972,123), Tomita (6,431,185) or Skee (6,465,403) mentions supplying an alkaline solution, an acid solution and the alkaline solution in this order to the surface of a substrate, as argued in the previous response.

The present invention attains high effectiveness in removing particles, since an alkaline solution, an acid solution and the alkaline solution are supplied in this order to the surface of the substrate. The particle removing effect is shown in Fig. 29. The present invention further attains the significant effect of shortening the rinsing process time by supplying the alkaline solution after supplying the acid solution, as well as improving the cleaning effect. This is different from

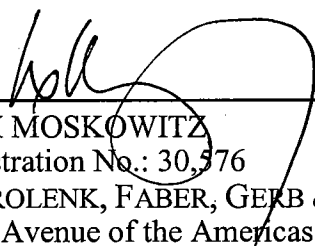
the effect obtained from the first and second steps, and thus, applicant has obtained an effect beyond those expected by persons having ordinary skill in the art.

Accordingly, given that applicant has clearly shown that supplying an alkaline solution, an acid solution and an alkaline solution again, in this order, does not just constitute repeating the cleaning step, the inventions according to pending claims 7-14, 21-24 and 27-28 cannot be deemed to be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art.

In view of the foregoing, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the application, allow the claims and pass this case to issue.

THIS CORRESPONDENCE IS BEING
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Respectfully submitted,



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